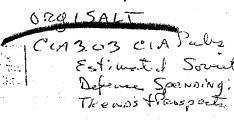
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## Loyalty and Independence



Defense Secretary Harold Brown and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski kicked off the campaign to sell the strategic arms agreement last week. The act was a bit out of sync, due to the absence of a treaty to sell. When the speeches were originally scheduled, the administration apparently thought it would have a treaty by now, but the bride has been left at the alternaging a service.

left at the altar again.

A treaty announcement seems likely soon though, and the speeches set us thinking about the ancient conflict between independence and loyalty. Obviously any member of the Carter administration has the blunt choice of supporting the impending treaty or resigning, with American institutions and traditions making the latter choice especially difficult. And the stakes being what they are, anyone with the least glimmer of a hardline image will be shoved out on the point of the sales effort. The moredoubts you have the more ardently you will be forced to defend the policy:

So after having done most of the negotiating and having shaped the agreement, Paul Warnke is gone. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance fades into the background. And Mr. Brzezinski and Secretary Brown are pushed to the front, no doubt to be followed by CIA Chief Stansfield Turner and U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Malcolm Toon. Theirs is not an enviable position. No doubt they all sincerely support the treaty in their own minds. But we wonder if they sell it to themselves the same way they are starting to sell it to the public.

Does the Secretary of Defense, for example; truly believe in his own mind that the treaty will save a lot of money at the Pentagon? Indeed, does he think the sums involved a significant consideration one way or another? One of his preoccupations in recent months has been trying to decide how to base the proposed new MX missile to protect it from a possible Soviet first strike. The cheapest alternative is to shuffle it around numerous different holes in the ground, but this would make it difficult to detect cheating on a SALT agreement. The most expensive alternative is to cart it around by airplane, but precisely because of SALT the Pentagon is leaning toward this more costly choice.

Fresh from these deliberations, Mr. Brown arrived in New York to argue that ratification of a treaty would mean that defense costs "would be significantly less expensive-perhaps as much as \$30 billion less expensive over the next decade." Now, this is not such a huge sum in comparison with the trillion dollars plus to be spent over a decade; the 10-year number was cumulated to frighten people about the costs of rejecting the treaty. But the notion of a "significant" cut in U.S. spending because of the treaty is frightening in a way that the Secretary may not have intended. Last June the CIA's public estimates of Soviet defense spending stated that "conclusion of a SALT II agreement along the lines currently being discussed would not, in itself, slow the growth of Soviet defense spending signifi-cantly." Surely the Secretary of Defense must understand the implications. Similarly, we are left wondering what the National Security Adviser really believes about "linkage." Mr. Brzezinski argued in Chicago that the treaty would "lead to more peaceful relations" between the superpowers, providing "the needed strategic stability for progress in political relations." However, he added, "no one should regard the SALT II treaty as a way to impose comprehensive constraints on everything that the Soviet Union does in its military and foreign policy, much less on what it does within its own society."

On the level of banality, these statements are unexceptionable: SALT will help, but don't expect miracles. But in the context of the debate, they declare: Heads I win, tails you lose. I am allowed to argue that SALT-II should be ratified to moderate Soviet behavior. But you are not allowed to respond that despite SALT-I and the ongoing negotiations, the Soviets have been anything but moderate in Angola, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and so on. In our view, the central reason to reject SALT-II is precisely to reject the whole course of Soviet-American relations that has unwound from SALT-I: the Americans lulled into complacency about strategic deployments, and the Soviets deploying weapons at an unprecedented rate and exploiting their momentum for political advantage throughout the world.

We can understand that the Carter administration's hardliners cannot agree, even if conceivably some of them might if they were in private life. But we hope as the debate unfolds, they will give us their own counsel, warts and all, rather than mouth arguments that appeal to the political masterminds at the White House. Their dilemma is well understood by worldly men, and how they resolve it will be remembered after SALT and after the Carter administration.